



GEORGE MUIR

Son of James Muir and Mary Reid. Born Oct. 16, 1831, in Scotland. Came to Utah in 1856. Handcart Company. Seventy. Participated in Echo Canyon trouble.

462

MUIR, GEORGE (son of James and Mary Reid). Born Oct. 16, 1831, in Scotland. Came to Utah 1856, handcart company.

Married Margaret Hannah (daughter of William Hannah and Jane Howie, pioneers 1856). She was born Jan. 1, 1829. Their children: Mary Jane, m. William Richardson; James; Margaret Ann; Isabella b. June 1860, m. John Thornton Richardson; Elizabeth; George; Christina Maria; Agnes. Family home Heber City, Utah.

Married Christina Howie (Lindsay) 1862, Salt Lake City. Their children: John, m. Sarah Rooker; George, m. Agnes Arinda Thomas.

Christina Howie was the widow of William Lindsay of Scotland and mother of the following children: Robert, m. Sarah Murdoch; William, m. Mary Mair; James, m. Agnes Watson; Baby, died; Samuel, m. Mary Reid; Andrew, m. Sarah Jane Thompson; Jane, m. William Shepard; Isabel, m. Joseph Smith; Elizabeth, d. aged 14 months. Family home Heber City, Utah.

Seventy. Opened coal mines at San Pete. Veteran Indian wars; participated in Echo Canyon trouble. Farmer. Died May 16, 1908, Heber City, Utah.

1049

# GEORGE MUIR, MARGARET HANNAH AND CHRISTINA HOWIE LINDSAY MUIR



George Muir, son of James and Mary Murray Muir, was born October 16, 1832, near Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland. After attending school a short time, George went to work in the coal mines, a vocation he followed most of his life. About 1847 he and his family joined the Mormon Church.

In 1853 he married Margaret Hannah, an orphan girl, born January 1, 1850, near Kilmarnock, who also had joined the Church. They had two children, Mary and Jane, before making plans to come to Utah.

They left Liverpool on March 19, 1856,

458

457

arriving at Boston May 23, 1856. Traveling by rail to Iowa City, Iowa, they stayed just long enough to prepare handcarts for the wearisome journey across the plains. They made their start on June 11, in the Scotch company headed by Daniel D. McArthur. Their two small children rode in the cart and George walked and pushed and pulled the handcart.

Near Fort Bridger, Wyoming, on September 22, 1856, Margaret gave birth to a baby boy, naming him James Mountain Muir. The others in the party moved on. One day later, George secured transportation for Margaret and the three children in an ox-drawn wagon and they were brought into Salt Lake four days behind the first handcarts to arrive.

They lived in Salt Lake until 1858. George assisted in bringing out some of the granite blocks for the Temple foundation. George then moved south to Provo, where he helped build a road up Provo Canyon to Heber. Later that year Brigham Young sent George to Sanpete County to open up a coal mine, one of the first in the state. Here he burned the first coking coal in the state. In this mining venture he had the misfortune to lose one of his eyes. He walked unassisted to Salt Lake for medical attention.

With his family, George moved to Heber in 1861 and homesteaded some land and built a log house in Heber.

Following the Mormon Church belief, he became a polygamist by marrying Christina Howie Lindsay, a widow from Scotland, in the fall of 1863, and helped rear her eight children by William Lindsay in addition to two sons, John Lindsay, born May 24, 1864, and George Lindsay, born February 16, 1867, under the polygamy covenant.

About 1867, George moved his two families to Coalville, where he went to work for the Wells-Fargo Company and opened up the Allen coal mine. He later opened up mines for the Union Pacific Railroad Co., first at Rock Springs and later at Evanston, Wyoming. He reportedly filed on a mining claim at Rock Springs, then decided it to the Church at the request of Brigham Young, to give the Church a stronger bargaining position with the Union Pacific Railroad when they built the road through to Utah. He also opened up coal mines for the

458

458

HOV

Mormon Church in Grass Creek Canyon. George Muir undoubtedly opened up more coal mines than any other person during the period 1858-90.

In 1881, George moved his families back to Heber. A year later his wife, Margaret, died after 30 years of marriage. They had reared nine children, Mary, Jane, James M., Margaret Ann, Isabella, Elizabeth, George, Christina and Agnes.

George and Christina continued their family life together many years, taking up more land in Center Creek, and with the help of her sons, building a beautiful red rock home in Heber.

With stepsons, James and Andrew Lindsay, George Muir was successful in boring the Strawberry (Willow Creek) tunnel, through which they brought irrigation water into the Great Basin from the Colorado River watershed, an accomplishment of note for its day, as it was the first transmountain diversion of water into the Great Basin.

Christina passed away on July 25, 1906. George lived two more years and was cared for by his son, George L. Muir, and Teenie Duke, daughter of James Lindsay. He died May 24, 1908, and was buried in Heber Cemetery.

Christina Howie Lindsay Muir was a remarkable woman. Born at Craighall, Ayrshire, Scotland, July 3, 1823, she worked as a dairy maid in her early teens. She married William Lindsay in 1844, and they joined the Mormon Church in 1848, which caused her family to disown her. However, Christina and William were very active in the Church. He was killed in a coal mine on October 17, 1861. Fulfilling their plans to come to Utah, Christina brought her eight children, Robert, Andrew, William, James, Samuel, Jean, Elizabeth and Isabella, to Utah in 1862. She moved to Heber, where she worked as a seamstress, cook and midwife until her marriage to George Muir the following year.

*The Center Creek Story* 1047

Through the years, the settlers and residents of Center Creek in eastern Provo Valley have enjoyed abundant living. They have enjoyed a life close to the soil. They have been close to the sun-lit pastures where cattle peacefully graze, and they have been close to the fields where seeds have sprouted and grown to provide food for men. There has been a life of prayer and toil mixed in along each row of seeds sown; of gratitude and thanksgiving with each harvest; and the joy of friends and loved ones close at hand.

Those who first settled the rich, green meadow lands along Center Creek were drawn there by the irrigation water available. Some of these pioneers who built log homes for their families and began clearing the land for farming were Thomas Ross, Joseph Fawcett, Joseph Cluff, James Adams and Jackson Smith.

By early 1861 there were 12 families living along the creek. This soon grew to 20 families, and the population was large enough to organize a branch of the Church. John Harvey moved to the community in 1861 to organize the branch and direct the Church activities. Reports are that the meetings were well attended, with some of the credit undoubtedly going to Ann Harvey who enlivened the meetings by an excellent choir that she trained and directed.

Farming activities in the community continued until 1866 when Indian troubles and the Black Hawk War broke out. The settlers were advised to leave their outlying homes along Center Creek and move closer to the main settlements of Heber. For more than 10 years the lands along Center Creek were uninhabited.

By 1877 the Indian problems were solved and leaders in the valley deemed it safe for those along Center Creek to return to their homes. Many of the original families had become established near Heber City and decided not to return.

Those who were instrumental in reestablishing Center were William Richardson Sr., a Mr. Blancher, Archie Sellers Sr., Joseph Thomas, Benjamin Cluff, George Muir Sr., William Pridey, William Cole, George Hyrum Sweat and Sid Worsley. In 1879 the Worsley homestead was purchased and developed by James Lindsay.

The Center Ward was organized on July 15, 1877 with Benjamin Cluff as Bishop. He chose as his counselors Sidney Worsley and John Harvey. Other counselors who served with Bishop Cluff were John Baird, William Blake and Archibald Richardson.